

“Disqualifications for Christians,” Part 1 - 1 Corinthians 10:1-4 – July 5th, 2015

- Today's teaching will be part one of a new series I've titled, "Disqualifications for Christians."
- Here in chapter 10, we turn a corner, as Paul goes from using himself as an example, to instead, using the Israelites example.
- In order to better understand where Paul is going with all of this, it's important to note that he is dealing with a serious problem.
- Namely, the carnality of the Corinthians in their Christianity. As such, Paul, by the Holy Spirit, deems it necessary to warn them.
- This because, what they were doing was serious enough to rise to the level of disqualifying them and in turn displeasing God.
- Please know that being disqualified is not in the context of our salvation rather, it's in the context of our rewards in finishing well.
- It's for this reason Paul must bring the Israelites into the discussion as an example. Simply put, the Israelites were disqualified.
- More specifically, they were disqualified from all the rewards that God had awaiting them vis-à-vis entering the Promised Land.
- Because Paul loves the Corinthian Christians so much, he's hoping to spare them of a similar fate by warning them in advance.
- I would suggest that the Corinthian's were, in effect, going down the same road and repeating the same mistakes Israel made.
- Just as the Israelites never entered the Promised Land, so too were the Corinthian's in danger of not entering into all God had.
- In other words, the Corinthian's were doing the very things the Israelites did, which is why Paul warns them by identifying them.

1. Relying on past blessings (Verses 1-4)

- v1 Paul says he didn't want them ignorant of the fact that their ancestors were under the cloud and had passed through the sea.
- v2-3 He goes on to say that they were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and the sea and they all ate the same spiritual food.
- v4 He then says they drank the same spiritual drink from the spiritual rock that had accompanied them, and that rock was Christ.
- What Paul is saying here is the Israelites had relied on and become secure in their past blessings of protection and provision.
- While there is certainly nothing wrong with relying on and being secure in God's blessings, the danger is if it becomes a license.
- By that I mean; spiritual blessings and spiritual experiences give us a false sense of security as it relates to freedoms in Christ.
- Let me explain, we think that God's blessings on our life will continue regardless of that which we do as Christians in our life.
- Perhaps better said, we wrongly believe that God will overlook our sinfulness under the banner of his past blessings on our life.
- This is the error the Israelites made and it was being repeated by the Corinthians such that, they too partook of these blessings.
- What were these blessings? They were God's blessing of both protection and provision when they were delivered out of Egypt.
- The protection, which was also for direction, came by way of the cloud by day, which protected the Israelites from desert heat.
- Then at night, God would direct them and protect them by the pillar of fire, which would warm them during the cold desert night.
- In addition to the blessing of protection they were the recipients of the miraculous provision of Manna to eat and water to drink.
- It's interesting to note that Paul would also mention the miraculous provision of passing through the Red Sea on dry ground.
- The reason this is interesting is that it speaks to the typology of two sacraments, the water baptism and the communion table.
- Be that as it may, and suffice it to say, all the blessings and miracles the Israelites experienced pointed to the person of Christ.
- Jesus was their cloud by day and their fire by night. Jesus was the greater than Moses in that it pointed to baptism in Christ.
- Jesus was their daily Manna from heaven and Jesus was the rock of their salvation from Whom they drank the life giving water.
- This begs the question of why Paul connects these dots, as it were, with the Israelites in the Exodus, and Christians in Corinth.
- I believe one of the reasons he does this is because both the Israelites and Corinthians had taken God's blessings for granted.
- In so doing, they fell prey to the excusing of certain practices that had taken up residence in both their lives and their church.
- Herein lies the lesson from our text, beware and be warned; God's blessings in the past do not give you license in the present.
- This applies to both that which is unlawful for me to do, and perhaps more importantly to that which is my freedom to do as well.
- The reason being is freedoms in Christ can easily become the catalyst to my sin against Christ, which is where Paul is headed.
- Next week, Lord willing, this is exactly what Paul will address. He specifically addresses the sins that disqualified the Israelites.
- The sins that disqualified the Israelites, and could disqualify the Corinthians, were a result of God's past blessings and miracles.
- Kindly allow me to explain how I get there. In a word; "Moses." Moses too was disqualified from entering the Promised Land.

Numbers 20:7–14 (NKJV) — 7 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 8 "Take the rod; you and your brother Aaron gather the congregation together. Speak to the rock before their eyes, and it will yield its water; thus you shall bring water for them out of the rock, and give drink to the congregation and their animals." 9 So Moses took the rod from before the LORD as He commanded him. 10 And Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock; and he said to them, "Hear now, you rebels! Must we bring water for you out of this rock?" 11 Then Moses lifted his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; and water came out abundantly, and the congregation and their animals drank. 12 Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not believe Me, to hallow Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them."

- The reason Moses was disqualified is because, in his anger, he disobeyed and misrepresented God by striking the rock twice.
- In other words, Moses wrongly assumed that because God blessed it in the past, He would bless disobedience in the present.
- I'll close with a question; "What blessing from God in the past am I using and excusing for my sin against God in the present?"